

### INTRODUCTION

There is considerable debate about the effects the inclusion of men in nursing have on the quality of patient care and the profession itself. Whilst nursing is seen as a predominately female orientated career, it is often forgotten that the patron saint of nursing is actually a man – St Camillus of Lellis, a 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian Monk. However, evolution both politically and religiously had meant that the contemporary male figure within the nursing fraternity slowly gave way to women as men became more engaged with careers more befitting their social standing such as medicine, the church or the military. Surprisingly, opinion about whether men are suitable within the profession continues to be a divided issue. Men enter the profession for a multitude of reasons, yet barriers whether emotional, verbal or sexual are still present. However, nursing is attractive because the variety of work enables an easy transition between specialties and the scope for career advancement is exciting both clinically and academically especially with the recent inception of nurse practitioner and nurse consultant roles.

### THE AIM

The aim of this study was to examine the experience of men “training” to be registered nurses within a regional New Zealand context

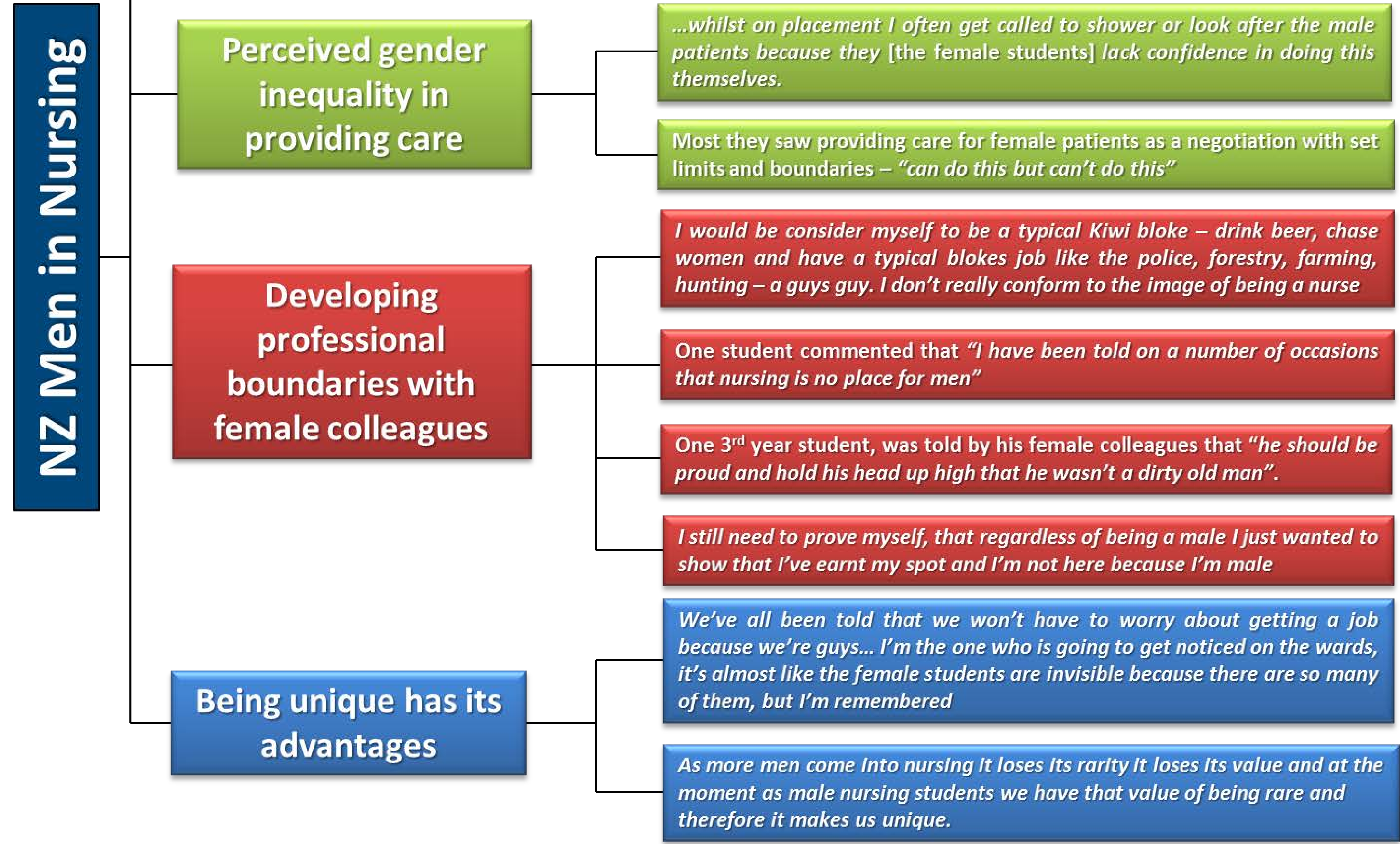
- ### METHODOLOGY
- Five New Zealand men currently undertaking their bachelor of nursing degree at a regional tertiary institute
  - A thematic narrative analysis was used based on Guest et al.’s framework
  - The location was a regional Polytechnic in the North Island of New Zealand



- ### RESULTS: 4 Themes Identified
- A career with flexibility and promise
  - Perceived gender inequality in providing care
  - Developing professional boundaries with female colleagues
  - Being unique has its advantages

### CONCLUSION

The men in this study were attracted to the profession by career stability and advancement; the opportunities for travel also figured highly. At times they felt excluded and marginalised because of their minority status within their group and the feminine nature of the curriculum. The men attempted to dispel the myth around male nurse sexual stereotypes. Some of the students behaved in a manner to exert their heterosexuality. The students in this study sensed their vulnerability in choosing nursing as a career. However, all the participants saw nursing as a viable and portable career in terms of advancement and travel.



### REFERENCES

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